

CLAIMS

What is claimed is:

1. A method for tracking a plurality of actions against at least one object by a computer system, the method comprising the steps of:

(a) providing an output view, wherein the output view includes a first output area and a second output area;

(b) listing each of the plurality of actions in an action list in one of the first and second output areas;

(c) allowing a user to select one action from the action list; and

(d) displaying information associated with the selected action in the other of the first and second output areas.

2. The method of claim 1, wherein at least two of the plurality of actions are executed concurrently.

3. The method of claim 2, wherein the listing step (b) further includes the steps of:

(b1) displaying an action description for each action in the action list;

(b2) displaying a running status of each action in the action list; and

(b3) displaying a name of an object against which each action in the action list is directed.

4. The method of claim 3, wherein the listing step (b) further includes the steps of:

- (b4) displaying a start timestamp for each action in the action list; and
- (b5) displaying an end timestamp for each action in the action list.

5 5. The method of claim 3, wherein the step of displaying the running status (b2) further includes the steps of:

- (b2i) presenting a textual description of the running status; and
- (b2ii) providing a visual description of the running status.

10 6. The method of claim 3, wherein the listing step (b) further includes the step of:

- (b4) entering a new action to the action list when the user has submitted the new action against an object.

15 7. The method of claim 4 further including the step of:

- (e) sorting the action list according to one of the start timestamp and the end timestamp of each action on the action list.

20 8. The method of claim 3 further including the step of:

- (e) sorting the action list by one of the action description, the running status and the object name.

9. The method of claim 1 further including the step of:

- (e) allowing the user to remove at least one of the actions from the action list.

10. The method of claim 9, wherein the step of removing the at least one action (e) further includes:

- (e1) setting a maximum number of actions in the action list; and
- (e2) replacing a least recent action in the action list with a new action when the maximum number of actions has been reached.

11. The method of claim 9, wherein the step of removing the at least one action (e) further includes:

- (e1) selecting an action for removal; and
- (e2) providing a popup menu to the user, wherein the popup menu allows the user to remove the selected action.

12. The method of claim 9, wherein the step of removing the at least one action (e) further includes:

- (e1) selecting an action for removal; and
- (e2) pressing a predefined key on a keyboard to delete the selected action.

13. The method of claim 2, wherein the information associated with the selected action includes a message, an associated result, and at least one parameter.

14. The method of claim 13, wherein the step of displaying (d) further includes the steps of:

(d1) allowing the user to select one of the message, the associated result, and the at least one parameter for the selected action; and

(d2) repeating step (d1) until the user is satisfied.

5 15. The method of claim 14 further including the step of:

(e) repeating steps (c) and (d) until the user is satisfied.

16. The method of claim 15, further including the step of:

(f) allowing the user to print, save, copy, and append to a file the information associated with the selected action.

10 17. A computer readable medium containing programming instructions for tracking a plurality of actions against at least one object by a computer system, comprising the instructions for:

15 (a) providing an output view, wherein the output view includes a first output area and a second output area;

(b) listing each of the plurality of actions in an action list in one of the first and second output areas;

(c) allowing a user to select an action from the action list; and

20 (d) displaying information associated with the selected action in the other of the first and second output areas.

18. The computer readable medium of claim 17, wherein at least two of the plurality of actions are executed concurrently.

19. The computer readable medium of claim 18, wherein the listing instruction (b) further includes instructions for:

- (b1) displaying an action description for each action in the action list;
- (b2) displaying a running status of each action in the action list; and
- (b3) displaying a name of an object against which each action in the action list is directed.

20. The computer readable medium of claim 19, wherein the listing instruction (b) further includes instructions for:

- (b4) displaying a start timestamp for each action in the action list; and
- (b5) displaying an end timestamp for each action in the action list.

21. The computer readable medium of claim 19, wherein the instruction for displaying the running status (b2) further includes instructions for:

- (b2i) presenting a textual description of the running status; and
- (b2ii) providing a visual description of the running status.

22. The computer readable medium of claim 19, wherein the listing instruction (b) further includes instruction for:

(b4) entering a new action to the action list when the user has submitted the new action against an object.

23. The computer readable medium of claim 20 further including the instruction for:

5 (e) sorting the action list according to one of the start timestamp and the end timestamp.

24. The computer readable medium of claim 19 further including the instruction for:

10 (e) sorting the action list by one of the action description, the running status and the object name.

25. The computer readable medium of claim 17 further including the instruction for:

(e) allowing the user to remove at least one of the actions from the action list.

15 26. The computer readable medium of claim 25, wherein the instruction for removing the at least one the action (e) further includes:

(e1) setting a maximum number of actions in the action list; and

(e2) replacing a least recent action in the action list with a new action when the maximum number of actions has been reached.

20 27. The computer readable medium of claim 25, wherein the instruction for removing the at least one action (e) further includes:

- (e1) selecting an action for removal; and
- (e2) providing a popup menu to the user, wherein the popup menu allows the user to remove the selected action.

5 28. The computer readable medium of claim 25, wherein the instruction for removing the
at least one action (e) further includes:

- (e1) selecting an action for removal; and
- (e2) pressing a predefined key on a keyboard to delete the selected action.

10 29. The computer readable medium of claim 18, wherein the information associated with
the selected action includes a message, an associated result, and at least one parameter.

 30. The computer readable medium of claim 29, wherein the instruction for displaying
(d) further includes:

- 15 (d1) allowing the user to select one of the message, the associated result, and
the at least one parameter for the selected action; and
- (d2) repeating step (d1) until the user is satisfied.

 31. The computer readable medium of claim 30 further including the instruction for:

- 20 (e) repeating steps (c) and (d) until the user is satisfied.

 32. The computer readable medium of claim 31, further including the instruction for:

(f) allowing the user to print, save, copy, and append to a file the information associated with the selected action.

5 33. A computer system for tracking a plurality of actions against at least one object comprising:

a display;

at least one processor coupled to the display for providing an output view on the display, wherein the output view includes a first output area and a second output area, and wherein an action list comprising each of the plurality of actions is displayed in one of the first and second output areas; and

an input device coupled to the processor for allowing a user to select an action from the action list;

wherein the processor causes information associated with the selected action to be displayed in the other of the first and second output areas of the output view.

15 34. The computer system of claim 33, wherein at least two of the plurality of actions are executed concurrently.

20 35. The computer system of claim 34, wherein the action list includes an action description, a running status of each action in the action list, and a name of an object against which each action in the action list is directed.

36. The computer system of claim 35, wherein the action list further includes a start timestamp and an end timestamp for each action in the action list.

5 37. The computer system of claim 35, wherein the running status includes a textual description and a visual description, wherein the visual description is an icon.

38. The computer system of claim 35, wherein a new action is added onto the action list when the user submits the new action.

10 39. The computer system of claim 36, wherein the action list is sorted according to one of the start timestamp and the end timestamp.

40. The computer system of claim 35, wherein the action list is sorted by one of the action description, the running status and the object name.

15 41. The computer system of claim 33 further including means for allowing the user to remove at least one of the actions from the action list.

20 42. The computer system of claim 41, wherein the means for allowing the user to remove the at least one action includes means for setting a maximum number of actions in the action list, and means for replacing a least recent action in the action list with a new action when the maximum number of actions has been reached.

43. The computer system of claim 41, wherein the means for removing the at least one action includes the input device for allowing the user to select an action for removal, and a popup menu for allowing the user to remove the selected action.

5 44. The computer system of claim 41, wherein the means for removing the at least one action includes the input device for allowing the user to select an action for removal, and a keyboard with a predefined key for deleting the selected action.

10 45. The computer system of claim 34, wherein the information associated with the selected action includes a message, an associated result, and at least one parameter.

15 46. The computer system of claim 45, wherein the input device allows the user to select one of the message, the associated result, and the at least one parameter for the selected action for display.

47. The computer system of claim 46, wherein the processor allows the user to print, save, copy, and append to a file the information associated with the selected action.